



**U.S. AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT
BUREAU FOR HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE (BHR)
OFFICE OF U.S. FOREIGN DISASTER ASSISTANCE (OFDA)**

GUINEA – Complex Emergency

Fact Sheet #3, Fiscal Year (FY) 2001

August 15, 2001

Numbers Affected

- In mid-June, UNHCR was able to verify an estimated 200,000 refugees (110,000 Sierra Leoneans, 90,000 Liberians) living in Guinea. UNHCR believes there may be thousands more refugees living throughout Guinea who have not sought UNHCR assistance. In mid-May, relief agencies estimated there were 178,000 IDPs in Guinea.

Current Situation/Relief Efforts

Security Situation

- The security situation in Guinea has generally remained stable during the month of June, although the conflict in neighboring Liberia and skirmishes along the borders of Liberia and Sierra Leone constantly pose a threat to spill over into Guinea. In April and May, the massive food distribution and evacuation efforts in the Parrot's Beak led to a tense security situation and attacks on commodity stockpiles. With the completion of the Parrot's Beak evacuation on May 29, and the reopening of the Conakry to Freetown road through Forecariah, the security situation stabilized.

Liberian Conflict

- The recent outbreak of violence in neighboring Lofa County, Liberia has forced an unknown number of Liberian refugees across the Guinean borders near Macenta and N'Zerekore. The Kouankan camp in the Macenta Prefecture houses an estimated 13,500 refugees, mostly Liberians, and registered 70 new arrivals in mid-June. There is currently a limited UNHCR presence in N'Zerekore, but UNHCR has indicated that they plan to reopen the Kola refugee camp in response to the influx of Liberians.

Refugee Situation

- Since the evacuation of the Parrot's Beak was completed, refugees have been settled primarily in the Albadaria and Dabola Prefectures of Upper Guinea. There are three active camps in Albadaria (Boreah, Kountaya, and Telikoro) and one in Dabola (Sembakounya). Additional camps in Albadaria and Dabola were planned, but construction was halted when it was determined that there were substantially fewer refugees in the Parrot's Beak than originally thought. The Massakoundou camp, which formerly housed an estimated 25,000 refugees, was shut down in May at the request of local authorities. UNHCR transferred the remaining refugees to Albadaria and Dabola. In addition to the camps in Central and Upper Guinea, the Mambia camp near Kindia has been established as a transit center for those Sierra Leonean refugees who may seek to repatriate.
- While more than 57,000 refugees were evacuated from the Parrot's Beak at the end of May, an unknown number of refugees still remain. Many of these refugees have stated that they prefer to remain in the Parrot's Beak or return to Sierra Leone on their own, rather than be relocated to another camp in Upper Guinea. Some of these refugees have planted crops and others are finding day labor. UNHCR has discontinued food, shelter, and medical assistance to refugees remaining in the Parrot's Beak, but several other relief agencies continue to provide assistance.

Refugee Repatriation

- On May 11, UNHCR reported that 71,231 Sierra Leonean refugees had returned to Sierra Leone from Guinea since September 2000. Over 50,000 of these refugees returned via International Organization for Migration (IOM) boats. While these boats traveled between Conakry and Freetown six days a week beginning in January, transporting thousands each week, as of mid-June they carry less than 300 refugees a week. With the reopening of the Conakry to Freetown road, relief agencies have discussed the possibility of moving returning refugees overland. However, many agencies feel that the security situation is still too precarious to attempt a massive overland repatriation at this time.

IDP Situation

- While there are still an estimated 178,000 IDPs in Guinea, some have begun to move back to their homes. With the improved stability and reconstruction efforts in the major market town of Gueckedou, many IDPs have returned to repair their homes and businesses in the area. The partial reestablishment of the Gueckedou market has enticed farmers to return to their fields in hopes of a renewed market demand for their crops. However, as

many IDPs continue to live with host families, relief agencies continue to target vulnerable IDPs and war-affected Guineans for assistance.

Agriculture

- With the recent onset of the rainy season in Guinea, many IDPs and war-affected Guineans, as well as some refugees, have begun planting crops. According to the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), Guinea enjoyed an above average harvest in 2000 and a record harvest in 1999. However, in 2001, many of the crops and much of the arable land was damaged or destroyed in the Forest Region. Several relief agencies have implemented agricultural recovery and seed distribution programs in an effort to return Guinea to its previous level of agricultural productivity, but a late start by many farmers could have a serious affect on the coming harvest.

Food Security

- In May, the U.N. World Food Program (WFP) and its partner agencies completed the first phase of the Emergency Operation Program (EMOP) 6312.00. WFP estimates that 190,000 IDPs and war-affected Guineans received emergency food assistance during the first phase. WFP distributed food in collaboration with the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), Organization Catholique pour la Promotion Human/Catholic Relief Services (OCPH/CRS), and Premiere Urgence in Kindia, Faranah, Mamou, Kankan, Forecariah, Kissidougou, Gueckedou and N'Zerekore. WFP has now entered the second phase of the EMOP, consisting of targeted distributions to a monthly average of 65,000 beneficiaries from May to September 2001.
- Also in May, UNHCR's distribution partner, Premiere Urgence, assisted 128,434 refugees in the Parrot's Beak, along the Kissidougou-Faranah axis, and the Albadaria area. OCPH began distribution to the Kouankan camp in early July. These relief agencies are providing emergency food assistance to refugees through WFP's Protracted Relief and Recovery Operation for West Africa (PRRO).

Background

- For more than a decade, Guinea has hosted hundreds of thousands of refugees from Liberia and Sierra Leone. A brutal civil war and human rights atrocities forced these refugees to move from their homes to the relative safety of neighboring Guinea. Until late 2000, most of the refugees had been living in camps and communities along Guinea's borders with Liberia and Sierra Leone. Beginning in September 2000, a series of armed incursions near Gueckedou, Macenta, and N'Zerekore resulted in substantial loss of life, destruction of property and crops, the disruption of livelihoods, and the displacement of hundreds of thousands of Guineans and refugees. The sporadic violence also severely hindered humanitarian assistance activities within the region, effectively isolating the Parrot's Beak area of the Forest Region from large-scale assistance.
- In early 2001, relief agencies began distributing food and other supplies to an estimated 150,000 internally displaced persons (IDPs) in the Forest, Upper, and Central Regions of Guinea. In February, the U.N. High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) was able to reach an estimated 180,000 refugees in Parrot's Beak for the first time in several months with emergency food aid. While sporadic attacks on villages in the Parrot's Beak continued into April, UNHCR and its partner agencies began the construction of new refugee camps in the Albadaria and Dabola Prefectures in Upper Guinea. In May, UNHCR completed the evacuation of more than 57,000 refugees from the Parrot's Beak to the new camps.

U.S. Government Humanitarian Assistance

- To date in FY 2001, USAID/OFDA has provided more than \$1 million in humanitarian assistance in support of ongoing agricultural programs, emergency non-food items, and humanitarian coordination programs for IDPs and war-affected Guineans.
- To date in FY 2001, USAID/Office of Food for Peace/Emergency Programs (FFP/EP) has provided \$7.6 million in emergency food assistance, including 13,770 MT of commodities, to WFP in support of refugees, IDPs, and war-affected Guineans.
- To date in FY 2001, the U.S. Department of State's Bureau for Population, Refugees, and Migration (State/PRM) has provided \$7.5 million in support of ongoing refugee assistance programs in Guinea.

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| USAID/BHR/OFDA..... | \$1,020,000 |
| USAID/BHR/FFP/EP | \$7,580,400 |
| State/PRM..... | \$7,500,000 |
| Total USG Humanitarian Assistance | \$16,100,400 |

USAID/OFDA fact sheets can be obtained from the USAID web site at http://www.usaid.gov/hum_response/ofda/situation.html